

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation of the People's Republic of Benin, Commandant Michel Alladaye, made an official visit to Canada on April 26th and 27th, at the invitation of the Canadian Government. Commandant Alladaye was accompanied by officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Equipment and of the Development Bank of Benin. The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation met with the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, and the President of the Canadian International Development Agency, Mr. Paul Gérin-Lajoie. In addition, he visited the Export Development Corporation, the International Development Research Centre and the Institute for International Co-operation. The discussions centred on political and economic relations between Canada and the People's Republic of Benin, and their mutual interest in relations between French-speaking countries.

Canadian and Benin authorities agreed that general relations between the two countries were very good. On the subject of bilateral co-operation, the two parties reviewed the projects presently under way: construction of a technical high school, a programme of preventive medicine and a centre for administrative planning and development. New projects were submitted by the Benin delegation and will be studied by CIDA.

The Canadian Government's programme of co-operation in Benin, which will be the subject of close consultation between the two parties, is established according to the priorities set by the Government of Benin in the field of development and corresponds also to the principles set forth in the Canadian strategy for international development for the years 1975 to 1980.

It was agreed to pursue this co-operation within a framework of understanding and friendship.

On the subject of relations between French-speaking countries, it was suggested by both parties that increased consultations within the framework of the activities of the "conférences de l'Agence de coopération culturelle et technique" would be appropriate.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs and Co-operation and the delegation of the People's Republic of Benin thanked the Secretary of State for External Affairs, the Honourable Allan J. MacEachen, and the Canadian Government for their warm welcome.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of Benin invited the Secretary of State for External Affairs to pay an official visit to his country, at a date which would be mutually convenient.